

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

1. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical preparation for treating hearing impairment by intrathecal administration, which comprises a plasmid encoding hepatocyte growth factor (HGF)-gene encapsulated in hemagglutinating virus of Japan envelope protein.

Claims 2-8 (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A method of treating hearing impairment, which comprises intrathecally administering, to a patient with hearing impairment, a hepatocyte growth factor (HGF)-gene or a plasmid encoding of a hepatocyte growth factor (HGF)-gene in an amount effective for the treatment encapsulated in hemagglutinating virus of Japan envelope protein to a patient with hearing impairment.

10. (new) The method according to claim 9, wherein the hearing impairment is deafness.

11. (new) A method of preventing hearing impairment, which comprises intrathecally administering a plasmid encoding hepatocyte growth factor (HGF) encapsulated in hemagglutinating virus of Japan envelope protein to a patient.

12. (new) The method according to claim 11, wherein the hearing impairment is deafness.